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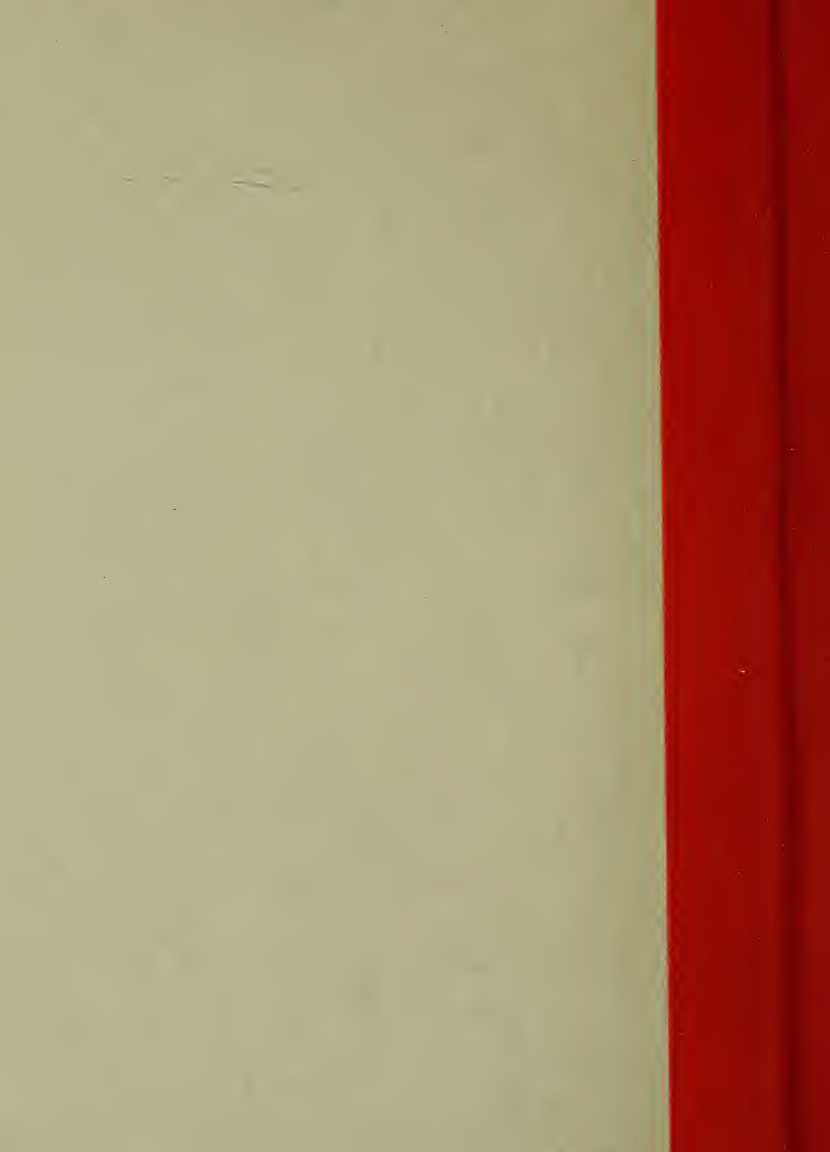
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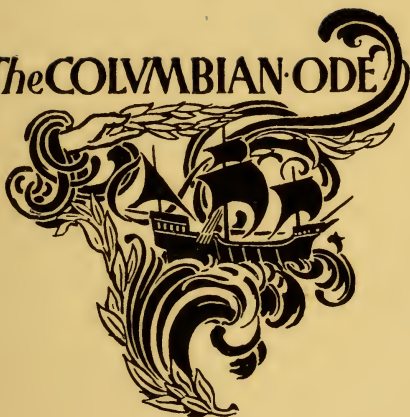


THE *SOUVENIR EDITION*
THE COLVMBIAN ODE



By
HARRIET MONROE

The COLVMBIAN ODE

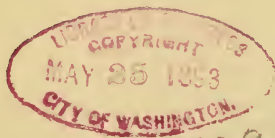


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By HARRIET MONROE

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HARRIET MONROE

NOTE

The Columbian Ode was written at the request of the Joint Committee on Ceremonies of the World's Columbian Exposition, accepted by that honorable body, and delivered on the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America, October 21, 1892, before an audience of more than one hundred thousand persons, during the dedicatory ceremonies in the building for Manufactures and Liberal Arts. By authority of the Committee, Mr. Theodore Thomas, Director of Music, requested Prof. George W. Chadwick, of Boston, to set to music the lyric passages. Prof. Chadwick admirably fulfilled the obligation. The two songs, commencing, "Over the wide unknown," and "Columbia! men beheld thee rise," and the passage of eight lines, commencing, "Lo! clan on clan, The embattled nations gather to be one,"—a passage which the composer selected for his finale,—were given by a chorus of five thousand voices, to the accompaniment of a great orchestra and military bands.



The COLUMBIAN ODE



OLUMBIA! on thy brow are
dewy flowers
Plucked from wide prairies and
from mighty hills.
Lo! toward this day have led the
steadfast hours.

Now to thy hope the world its beaker fills.
The old earth hears a song of blessed themes,
And lifts her head from a deep couch of dreams.
Her queenly nations, elder-born of Time,
Troop from high thrones to hear,
Clasp thy strong hands, tread with thee paths sublime,
Lovingly bend the ear.

Spain, in the broidered robes of chivalry,
Comes with slow foot and inward-brooding eyes.
Bow to her banner! 't was the first to rise
Out of the dark for thee.
And England, royal mother, whose right hand
Molds nations, whose white feet the ocean tread,
Lays down her sword on thy belovèd strand
To bless thy wreathèd head;
Hearing in thine her voice, bidding thy soul
Fulfil her dream, the foremost at the goal.
And France, who once thy fainting form upbore,
Brings beauty now where strength she brought of yore.
France, the swift-footed, who with thee
Gazed in the eyes of Liberty,
And loved the dark no more.

Around the peopled world
Bright banners are unfurled.
The long procession winds from shore to shore.
The Norseman sails
Through icy gales
To the green Vineland of his long-ago.
Russia rides down from realms of sun and snow.

Germany casts afar
Her iron robes of war,
And strikes her harp with thy triumphal song.
Italy opens wide her epic scroll,
In bright hues blazoned, with great deeds writ long,
And bids thee win the kingdom of the soul.
And the calm Orient, wise with many days,
From hoary Palestine to sweet Japan
Salutes thy conquering youth ;
Bidding thee hush while all the nations praise,
Know, though the world endure but for a span,
Deathless is truth.
Lo! unto these the ever-living Past
Ushers a mighty pageant, bids arise
Dead centuries, freighted with visions vast,
Blowing dim mists into the Future's eyes.
Their song is all of thee,
Daughter of mystery.

Alone! alone!
Behind wide walls of sea!
And never a ship has flown
A prisoned world to free.

Fair is the sunny day
On mountain and lake and stream,
Yet wild men starve and slay,
And the young earth lies adream.
Long have the dumb years passed with vacant eyes,
Bearing rich gifts for nations throned afar,
Guarding thy soul inviolate as a star,
Leaving thee safe with God till man grow wise.
At last one patient heart is born
Fearless of ignorance and scorn.
His strong youth wasteth at thy sealèd gate —
Kings will not open to the untrod path.
His hope grows sere while all the angels wait,
The prophet bows under the dull world's wrath,
Until a woman fair
As morning lilies are
Brings him a jeweled key —
And lo! a world is free.
Wide swings the portal never touched before,
Strange luring winds blow from an unseen shore.
Toward dreams that cannot fail
He bids the three ships sail,
While man's new song of hope rings out against the
gale.



VER the wide unknown,
Far to the shores of Ind,
On through the dark alone,
Like a feather blown by the wind;
Into the west away,
Sped by the breath of God,

Seeking the clearer day

Where only his feet have trod:
From the past to the future we sail;
We slip from the leash of kings.

Hail, spirit of freedom — hail!

Unfurl thine impalpable wings!
Receive us, protect us, and bless

Thy knights who brave all for thee.
Though death be thy soft caress,

By that touch shall our souls be free.
Onward and ever on,

Till the voice of despair is stilled,
Till the haven of peace is won,
And the purpose of God fulfilled!

O strange, divine surprise!
Out of the dark man strives to rise,
And struggles inch by inch with toil and tears;
Till, lo! God stoops from his supernal spheres,
And bares the glory of his face.
Then darkness flees afar,
This earth becomes a star —
Man leaps up to the lofty place.
We ask a little — all is given.
We seek a lamp — God grants us heaven.
So these who dared to pass beyond the pale
For an idea tempting the shrouded seas,
Sought but Cathay. God bade their faith prevail
To find a world — blessed his purposes!
The hero knew not what a virgin soul
Laughed through glad eyes when at her feet he laid
The gaudy trappings of man's masquerade.
She who had dwelt in forests, heard the roll
Of lakes down-thundering to the sea,
Beheld from gleaming mountain heights
Two oceans playing with the lights
Of eve and morn — ah! what would she
With all the out-worn pageantry
Of purple robes and heavy mace and crown?
Smiling she casts them down,

Unfit her young austerity
Of hair unbound and strong limbs bare and brown.

Yet they who dare arise
And meet her stainless eyes
Forget old loves, though crownèd queens these be ;
And whither her winged feet fare
They follow though death be there —
So sweet, so fleet, so goddess-pure is she.
Her voice is like deep rivers, that do flow
Through forests bending low.
Her step is softest moonlight, that doth force
The ocean to its course.
Gentle her smile, for something in man's face,
World-worn, time-weary, furrowed deep with tears,
Thrills her chaste heart with a more tender grace.
Softly she smoothes the wrinkles from his brow,
Wrought by the baleful years,
Smiles sunshine on the hoar head, whispers low
New charges from the awakened will of Truth —
Words all of fire, that thrill his soul with youth.
Not with his brother is man's battle here.
The challenge of the earth, that Adam heard,
His love austere breathes in his eager ear.

And lo! the knight who warred at love's command,
And scarred the face of Europe, sheathes his sword,
Hearing from untaught lips a nobler word,
Taking new weapons from an unstained hand.
With axe and oar, with mallet and with spade,
She bids the hero conquer, unafraid
Though cloud-veiled Titans be his lordly foes —
Spirits of earth and air, whose wars brook no repose.

For from far-away mountain and plain,
From the shores of the sunset sea,
The unwearying rulers complain, complain,
And throng from the wastes to defend their reign,
Their threatened majesty.
The low prairies that lie abloom
Sigh out to the summer air:
Shall our dark soil be the tomb
Of the flowers that rise so fair?
Shall we yield to man's disdain,
And nourish his golden grain?
We will freeze and burn and snare.
Ah! bid him beware! beware!
And the forests, heavy and dark and deep
With the shadows of shrouded years,

In a murmurous voice, out of age-long sleep,
Ask the winds: What creature rude
Would storm our solitude?

Hath his soul no fears, no tears?

The prone rivers lift up their snow-crowned heads,
Arise in wrath from their rock-hewn beds,

And roar: We will ravage and drown
Ere we float his white ships down.

And the lakes, from a mist
Of amethyst,

Call the storm-clouds down, and grow ashen and
brown.

And all the four winds wail:

Our gales shall make him quail.

By blinding snow, by burning sun

His strength shall be undone.

Then men in league with these —

Brothers of wind and waste —

Hew barbs of flint, and darkly haste
From sheltering tents and trees;

And mutter: Away! away!

Ye children of white-browed day!

Who dares profane our wild gods' reign

We torture and trap and slay.

Child of the light, the shadows fall in vain.

Herald of God, in vain the powers conspire.

Armed with truth's holy cross, faith's sacred fire,
Though often vanquished, he shall rise again,
Nor rest till the wild lords of earth and air
Bow to his will, his burdens glad to bear.
The angels leave him not through the long strife,
But sing large annals of their own wide life,
Luring him on to freedom. On that field,

From giants won, shall man be slave to man?

Lo! clan on clan,

The embattled nations gather to be one,
Clasp hands as brothers 'neath Columbia's shield,
Upraise her banner to the shining sun.

Along her blessed shore

One heart, one song, one dream —

Man shall be free forevermore,

And love shall be supreme.

When dreaming kings, at odds with swift-paced time,
Would strike that banner down,
A nobler knight than ever writ or rhyme
With fame's bright wreath did crown

Through armed hosts bore it till it floated high
Beyond the clouds, a light that cannot die!

Ah, hero of our younger race!

Great builder of a temple new!

Ruler, who sought no lordly place!

Warrior, who sheathed the sword he drew!

Lover of men, who saw afar

A world unmarred by want or war,

Who knew the path, and yet forbore

To tread, till all men should implore;

Who saw the light, and led the way

Where the gray world might greet the day;

Father and leader, prophet sure,

Whose will in vast works shall endure,

How shall we praise him on this day of days,

Great son of fame who has no need of praise?

How shall we praise him? Open wide the doors

Of the fair temple whose broad base he laid.

Through its white halls a shadowy cavalcade

Of heroes moves o'er unresounding floors —

Men whose brawned arms upraised these columns

high,

And reared the towers that vanish in the sky —
The strong who, having wrought, can never die.

And lo! leading a blessed host comes one
Who held a warring nation in his heart;
Who knew love's agony, but had no part
In love's delight; whose mighty task was done
Through blood and tears that we might walk in joy,
And this day's rapture own no sad alloy.
Around him heirs of bliss, whose bright brows wear
Palm-leaves amid their laurels ever fair.

Gaily they come, as though the drum
Beat out the call their glad hearts knew so well.

Brothers once more, dear as of yore,
Who in a noble conflict nobly fell.
Their blood washed pure yon banner in the sky,
And quenched the brands laid 'neath these arches
high—

The brave who, having fought, can never die.

Then surging through the vastness rise once more
The aureoled heirs of light, who onward bore

Through darksome times and trackless realms of ruth
The flag of beauty and the torch of truth.

They tore the mask from the foul face of wrong ;

Even to God's mysteries they dared aspire ;

High in the choir they lit yon altar-fire,

And filled these aisles with color and with song :

The ever-young, the unfallen, wreathing for time

Fresh garlands of the seeming-vanished years ;

Faces long luminous, remote, sublime,

And shining brows still dewy with our tears.

Back with the old glad smile comes one we knew —

We bade him rear our house of joy to-day.

But Beauty opened wide her starry way,

And he passed on. Bright champions of the true,

Soldiers of peace, seers, singers ever blest —

From the wide ether of a loftier quest

Their winged souls throng our rites to glorify —

The wise who, having known, can never die.

Strange splendors stream the vaulted aisles along —

To these we loved celestial rapture clings.

And music, borne on rhythm of rising wings,

Floats from the living dead, whose breath is song.

Columbia, my country, dost thou hear?

Ah! dost thou hear the songs unheard of Time?
Hark! for their passion trembles at thine ear.

Hush! for thy soul must heed their call sublime.
Across wide seas, unswept by earthly sails,
Those strange sounds draw thee on, for thou shalt be
Leader of nations through the autumnal gales
That wait to mock the strong and wreck the free.

Dearer, more radiant than of yore,

Against the dark I see thee rise;

Thy young smile spurns the guarded shore

And braves the shadowed ominous skies.

And still that conquering smile who see

Pledge love, life, service all to thee.

The years have brought thee robes most fair —

The rich processional years,

And filleted thy shining hair,

And zoned thy waist with jewels rare,

And whispered in thine ears

Strange secrets of God's wondrous ways,

Long hid from human awe and praise.

For lo! the living God doth bare his arm.

No more he makes his house of clouds and gloom.

Lightly the shuttles move within his loom;

Unveiled his thunder leaps to meet the storm.
From God's right hand man takes the powers that sway
 A universe of stars.
He bows them down; he bids them go or stay;
 He tames them for his wars.
He scans the burning paces of the sun,
And names the invisible orbs whose courses run
 Through the dim deeps of space.
He sees in dew upon a rose impearled
The swarming legions of a monad world
 Begin life's upward race.
 Voices of hope he hears
 Long dumb to his despair,
 And dreams of golden years
 Meet for a world so fair.
For now Democracy doth wake and rise
 From the sweet sloth of youth.
By storms made strong, by many dreams made wise,
 He clasps the hand of Truth.
Through the armed nations lies his path of peace,
 The open book of knowledge in his hand.
Food to the starving, to the oppressed release,
 And love to all he bears from land to land.
 Before his march the barriers fall,
 The laws grow gentle at his call.

His glowing breath blows far away
The fogs that veil the coming day —
That wondrous day
When earth shall sing as through the blue she rolls
Laden with joy for all her thronging souls.
Then shall Want's call to Sin resound no more
Across her teeming fields. And Pain shall sleep,
Soothed by brave Science with her magic lore,
And War no more shall bid the nations weep.
Then the worn chains shall slip from man's desire,
And ever higher and higher
His swift foot shall aspire ;
Still deeper and more deep
His soul its watch shall keep,
Till Love shall make the world a holy place,
Where Knowledge dares unveil God's very face.

Not yet the angels hear life's last sweet song.
Music unutterably pure and strong
From earth shall rise to haunt the peopled skies
When the long march of Time,
Patient in birth and death, in growth and blight,
Shall lead man up through happy realms of light
Unto his goal sublime.



OLUMBIA! Men beheld thee rise
A goddess from the misty sea.
Lady of joy, sent from the skies,
The nations worshiped thee.
Thy brows were flushed with dawn's
first light

By foamy waves with stars bedight
Thy blue robe floated free.

Now let the sun ride high o'erhead,
Driving the day from shore to shore.
His burning tread we do not dread,
For thou art evermore
Lady of love whose smile shall bless,
Whom brave deeds win to tenderness,
Whose tears the lost restore.

Lady of hope thou art. We wait
With courage thy serene command.
Through unknown seas, toward undreamed fate,
We ask thy guiding hand.
On! though sails quiver in the gale!—
Thou at the helm, we cannot fail.
On to God's time-veiled strand!

Lady of beauty! thou shalt win
Glory and power and length of days.
The sun and moon shall be thy kin,
The stars shall sing thy praise.
All hail! we bring thee vows most sweet
To strew before thy wingèd feet.
Now onward be thy ways!







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